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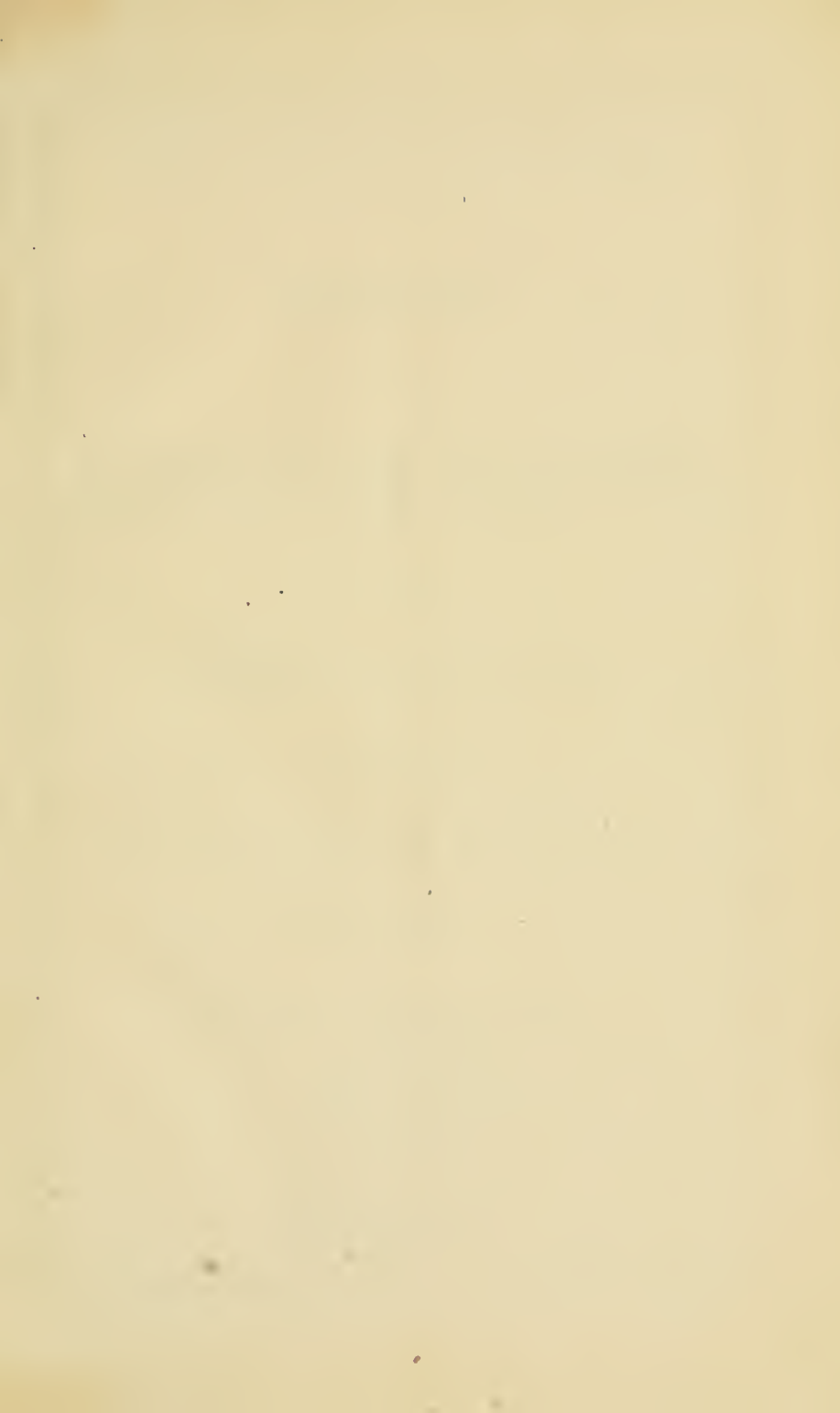
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.





"LET US HAVE PEACE!"

REMARKS

OF

LOGAN H. ROOTS,

ON THE

Assassination of Hon James Hinds,

DELIVERED IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

WASHINGTON, D. C.,

On Friday, January 22, 1869.

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REMARKS
BY
HON. LOGAN H. ROOTS.

MR. SPEAKER—

The sad subject occupying the attention of this honorable body is one that bears upon my mind with peculiar force. I was personally acquainted with JAMES HINDS during a busy portion of his eventful life, and it was in the district that I have the honor to represent in which he met his terrible death by political assassination.

His life, though short, was long enough for many hundreds to have become so endeared as to have wished it longer. His life, though short, was long enough to afford a wonderfully instructive lesson of encouragement to all those in this crowded world struggling against the barriers of poverty. Its history is an account of the child of poverty, developed into the honored man by its own exertions. Its history recounts what mighty results may be accomplished on no other capital than a clear intellect under the impetus of an indomitable will. Generally, when one falls so young the exclamation is, "Oh! what might have been." In this instance imagination might feast itself on such a theme *ad libitum*; but that is not necessary, it is grand enough to say, "See what was!"

Only twenty years ago JAMES HINDS was a fatherless, penniless lad. But so determined was he to acquire

knowledge that he attended school when he only did so by hiring a room, doing his own housekeeping, and working enough beside outside of school hours to earn the means of paying for his school expenses and daily living. Such earnest perseverance created success even under the most lowering clouds of adversity.

Traveling by such rugged steps he did not come upon the stage of manhood a mere hot-house production of opulence, but an earnest, laborious youth, gradually developed into a self-made, self-reliant man. Experience taught him to never wait for the coming of success or friends, but first make success, and then friends would come. His nature and training alike rendered it equally impossible for him to play sycophant to the rich or oppressor to the poor. His warm sympathy with the oppressed and downtrodden touched a responsive chord in men's hearts that returned him in a remarkable degree the affection of the masses. The humblest and most friendless loved him without fear of being repulsed, and learned to regard him as their especial champion.

When the great struggle came between human oppression and the nation's life, he was at once found positively on the side of his country, and he went forth to do battle upon the side of loyalty, of freedom, and justice to humanity.

It is now, though, nearly four years since the happy moment arrived when he considered the struggle ended. We all proudly felt that henceforth free speech and free men were to be as universal south of Mason and

Dixon's line as they long had been north. It was at that happy period that Mr. HINDS was allured by the genial clime and inviting features of the Southwest to make his home in Arkansas, and engaged in the practice of his profession with an assiduity that received merited success.

Alas! it was not long until the fact was developed that the fierce fires built on human oppression to destroy and keep destroyed the relations of the State to the nation were not extinguished, but only smoldering; compressed and changed, but not abated. When this fact was developed, and the question arose as to whether or not Arkansas should make an effort to regain her lost sisterhood in the great family of States, notwithstanding the odium and dangers with which those who had severed the State from her proper relations cast about such a course, JAMES HINDS became an earnest advocate of her return to the loyal household. Elected to the Constitutional Convention by one of the largest majorities in the State, he soon became recognized as one of the prominent leaders, and to him the humble, toiling citizen of that State owes a debt of gratitude he can never repay; for in the construction of the fundamental law of the State he was most active in the introduction and riveting of those points which are barriers of protection for the many weak against the few strong, and for the securing to the humblest all the rights of citizenship granted to the proudest.

After the adjournment of the convention and the submittal of its work to the people, he was elected by

a remarkably large vote to a seat in this body, and even in the brief period of his presence here he exhibited a lively interest in the welfare of the State and indefatigable efforts to promote her good without failing to strive for the greatest weal of the whole nation.

Immediately upon the closing of the summer session he went to his home and entered vigorously into the canvass for freedom, peace, and prosperity against caste, oppression, revolution, and murder. I know, sirs, many of you may think that the party which Mr. HINDS opposed was equally anxious for peace with the party whose principles he espoused. That might have been the case in other places, but in Arkansas, at least, their acts showed that the Republican party advocated peace with a desire that the beloved white-winged spirit of peace might settle and abide in the land. But when the Democracy did for a moment advocate peace, their desire seemed to be for pieces of Radical skulls. To advocate real peace was not entering upon a holiday pleasure excursion, but was to brave death and tread on the very verge of eternity. All this JAMES HINDS knew, yet faltered not. A few days before his death he wrote to a friend:

"We must win the election, stand a fight, or leave the State, and it is sad to think that many of our number, perhaps myself included, must be murdered before seeing the ides of November, to know whether we win, fight, or leave."

On the day of his murder he was in a county which he considered less dangerous than some through which he had traversed, and he so expressed himself, but added:

“With men all over the country bound by terrible oaths to take Radical lives, we do not know where there is any safety. Oh! it is terrible. But it may be that it is all for the best, for they say the ‘blood of the martyr is the seed of the church,’ and it may be that the loyal blood now drenching this land will arouse those criminally timid men who had the power and withheld the grant of arms to our State authorities, and arouse the patriotic masses to realize it is the nation’s duty to protect the nation’s citizens.”

Oh! little did he think at that moment that ere the sunlight of that beautiful October day should give way to the cold dew of night his own soul would be driven from his body by the cold damp of death. He was traveling with Hon. Joseph Brooks, another tried and valiant soldier in the great cause of freedom and equal rights. They were to speak that day about six miles from the village of Indian Bay. They had been refused passage on a steamboat because they were Radicals, and so were belated. Some hundreds of eager, expectant Republicans were awaiting their arrival. To this meeting the officers of the Democratic club had gone as advocates of the adoption of “joint peace resolutions.” The Republicans said that several Radicals had then recently been killed in the county and no Democrats; and therefore they thought if the Democracy had suddenly acquired a desire for peace no resolutions were necessary; but although some of them thought it merely a cloak for Democratic villany, they were willing to bind themselves in resolutions to do what they intended doing anyhow, and they therefore unanimously adopted the resolutions. One of the principle signers and most apparently earnest advocates was George W. Clark, secretary of the Democratic club. But as soon as he had signed them he returned

to his home, arriving there before Messrs Brooks and HINDS had reached that far, and himself gave the fated ones direction as to the road. When they had ridden on he got his gun, saddled his horse, and rode after them. The intended victims were riding along with their greatest solicitude at the moment, being anxious though to reach the waiting crowd. The horses being differently gaited, Mr. Brooks was at the moment some fifty yards ahead. The man with grayish suit on rode up near, but a very little in the rear of Mr. HINDS, smiling as Judas may have smiled when he kissed his Lord and Master, he engaged in pleasant conversation. For a second the three thus rode on, the victims wholly unsuspecting, and the smiling murderer, with cold-blooded calculation, waiting for a better opportunity to make sure of both. An illustration of the meaning of Democratic peace resolutions is about to be made. The same hand which a few hours before signed peace resolutions now grasps the assassin's weapon, within a very few feet of Mr. HINDS' back, the gun is suddenly raised. Click, click, hear the triggers! Oh! the terrible instant! bang, bang, goes the gun. Mr. Brooks's horse, stung with buckshot, bounds ahead with a wounded rider, while the second horse madly leaps forward riderless, and JAMES HINDS lies on the ground motionless, dying. Another order of the Ku-Klux-Klan has been executed; smiling with a fiend's smile upon his features stands the Democratic assassin; the soul of another martyr is sent unshriven before the arbitrator of eternity; dying, shot

in the back, lies the Radical Congressman. Would to God the curtain of oblivion might drop over the scene forever!

JAMES HINDS' spirit has passed from earth, but his life, deeds, and death will not soon pass from memory, so well he lived, so hard he toiled, so young was he gathered into the unseen fold, that when we think of him we cannot avoid to lament that:

"The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory."

He had so many noble qualities and won so many strong friends we can very easily drop the veil of charity over his faults, whatever they may have been. Had he been faultless he could not have been human. It is said a death-bed is a detector of human hearts. If so, it is pleasing to know that in his expiring moments, lying with no more friendly touch than the breast of mother earth, his few words were not concerning his own death tortures, but were expressions of solicitude for his wife and two sweet daughters whom he loved so dearly. Could you, sirs, have seen the hundreds of compressed lips and wet eyes which spoke in an eloquence and intensity of grief words could not be framed to utter when his remains passed through the City of Little Rock. You would have exclaimed, "Behold, how they loved him," and certainly he who has thus won the love of man must have a strong claim on the mercy of God.

But ceremonies in honor of the dead can only be beneficial in so far as they affect the actions of the liv-

ing. Could the spirit of JAMES HINDS speak to us to-day it would not be with an effort to induce fulsome eulogies upon those who are beyond mortal aid, but from the portals of the dead he would say protect the living.

The nation has the power to obey such a request, and when the people arose in their might and majesty on the 3d day of November, it was to declare in unmistakable terms their heartfelt approbation of the promise of him whom they felt had the power to execute the promise that freedom and protection should be guarantied as well on the warm gulf coast as on the cold lake shores. That was the key-note of the entire canvass. The mighty leader of the loyal hosts was a popular man, remarkably, deservedly popular for his glorious services to his country. But he was most popular from the full confidence that the people had in him that he had the will and the power to speak into peace and tranquility the angry waves of prejudice and passion that were raging in the South, crimsoned with human gore. It was the embodiment of that will and power for which the nation in such overwhelming numbers spoke its preference, and the present is an auspicious moment to inaugurate obedience to the people's behests. Many good men who have always wanted peace, but could not tear themselves loose from political thralldom in the heat of political excitement, now express their earnest, anxious longing for protection of life and the restoration of peace to the country.

The very leaders of the political assassinations them-

selves seem now to be partially revolting from the horrible atrocities of the execution of their own schemes and orders, which feeling, added to the wholesome belief they have that the authorities will be sustained, lives will be protected, and peace will be maintained, is making even them for the time converts to the great loyal heart's desire for restoration of peace and protection.

It is not indemnification for the past that is asked, it is only security for the future. The murdered cannot be brought to life, but the murderers can be made to spare the living. Honeyed words alone cannot accomplish this, but men must be made to feel that protection will prove more profitable than assassination; kind words may do the work if it is positively known that the nation supports the State authorities, so that there is a reserve of sterner power which can be brought to the support of kindness on any instant of emergency. Let party lines be obliterated in this desire for the maintainance of peace and protection. Let partisans now be absorbed in patriots, so that all men, Republicans and Democrats alike, will feel an inspiration of such God-given patriotism as found utterance from the steps of this building when nearly four years ago he who spake as one with less in him of earth than heaven, said: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to do all which may achieve, and cherish a just and lasting peace." His words fell with magic effect, because, while he extended the olive-branch with the left, in his right hand he wielded the

great American Army, the most potential power on the face of the earth. The olive-branch should still be extended, but it will only be to loose the hand that offers it unless it is demonstrated that the strong arm of power will be used whenever necessary to overwhelm the crushing tyranny of lawlessness and oppression.

Ages gone the great Omnipotent who snatched time from eternity and spoke system from chaos, said "Let there be light," and the sacred chronicler informs us "there was light." To-day the mighty people who have saved the nation's life in the sanguinary struggle and declared freedom in the kingdom of slavery, have said "let us have peace." Shall not the historian who records the doings of this year be allowed to say "there was peace?"

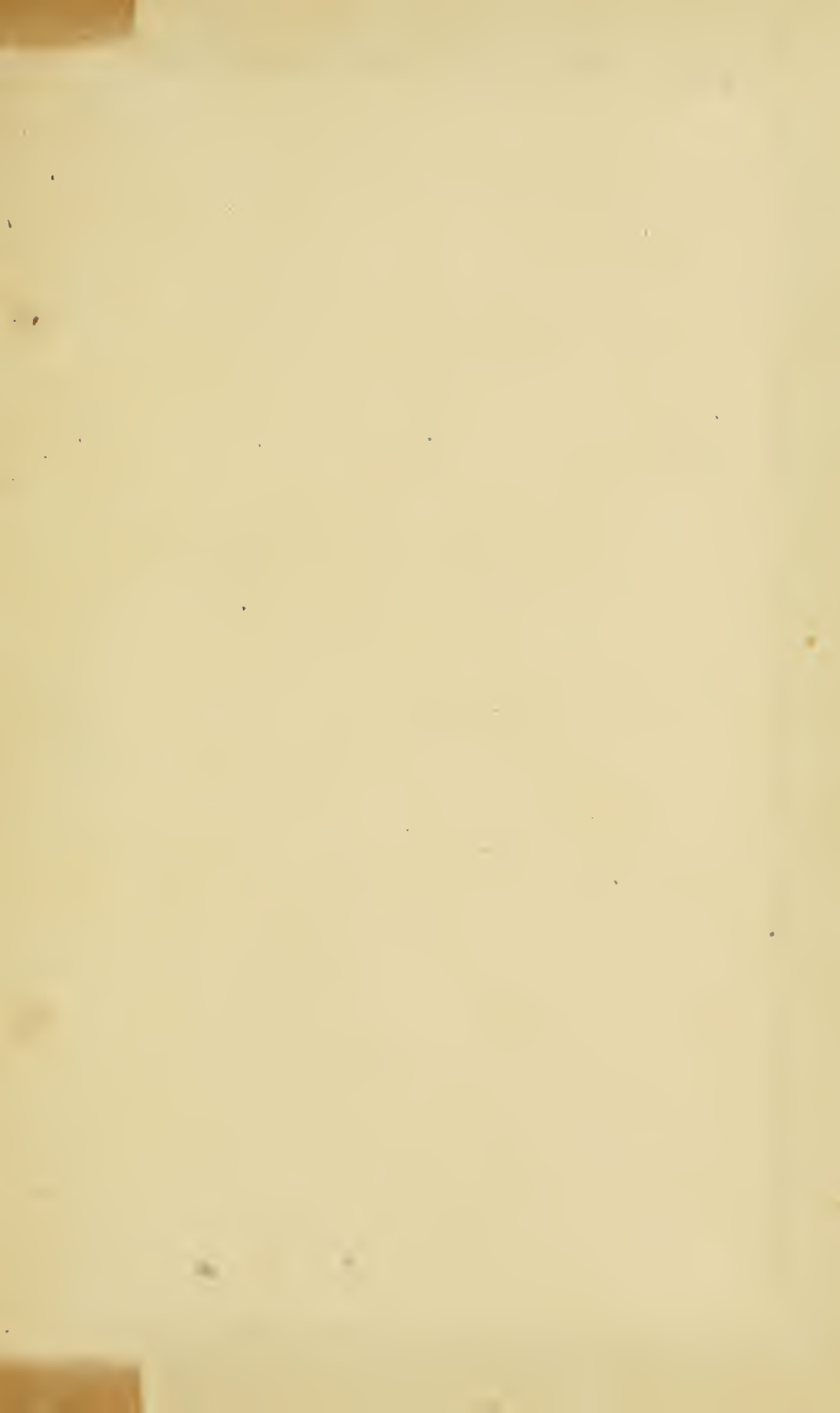
Oh, shall it not be so! The spirit of JAMES HINDS unites with hundreds (you know not how many) of other spirits of treacherously murdered men in beseechingly asking the question. Their suffering widows and orphans, without even the little comforting crumb of a Government pension, are weepingly asking the question. The hundreds of thousands of maimed and crippled loyal men who fought and suffered beside comrades who, fighting, fell to establish peace and protection, are earnestly asking the question. Thirty-eight million inhabitants in these United States whose prosperity can only be commensurate with the maintenance of peace and protection, all join in prayerfully asking the question. The countless lovers of freedom throughout the whole world with one accord are looking to this nation and anxiously asking the question. And, sirs, remember the Representatives of the people and the Government must be responsible for the answer.











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